

Dept. Legis: Fed Aid to Ed  
Wall, John W.

August 25, 1960

Mr. John W. Wall, Secretary  
Rhode Island Hospital Trust Company  
Providence 1, Rhode Island

Dear Mr. Wall:

Please forgive my delay in replying to your recent letter concerning your interest in Federal Aid to Education, but I wanted to go into the matter rather thoroughly with the U. S. Commissioner of Education here in Washington with regard to some of the questions you had raised.

Commissioner Derthick informs me it is true, that in the United States as a whole and in Rhode Island, there has been some improvement over previous years in the number of classrooms built. However, from the enclosed copy of the Fall 1959 Enrollment, Teachers, and Schoolhousing survey, it is noted that the Rhode Island State Department of Education reported 416 additional instruction rooms were needed in the fall of 1959 and only 242 were scheduled for completion during the year (page 15).

Looking at the problem in terms of the number of children involved (page 10), it is noted that in 1958 there were 4,335 children in Rhode Island enrolled in excess of normal capacity; but in the fall of 1959 there were 5,387 children enrolled in excess of normal capacity, or an increase of 24.3 percent over the previous year. Not only were the 5,387 children enrolled in excess of normal capacity last school year suffering because of overcrowded classrooms, half-day sessions, and unsatisfactory facilities, but so was every other child enrolled in a class which had even one more child than it could satisfactorily accommodate.

It is my opinion that a child has only one chance to gain an education; and an education of poor quality, for whatever reason, is something which affects his whole life, and is something which he himself is powerless to correct. The child must depend upon his community, and its citizens, to make it possible for him to secure the kind of education which will enable him to develop to his full capacity, and become of the greatest possible benefit to our society and nation.

It is for these reasons that the President has asked the Congress to enact a program of Federal assistance to help needy school districts build urgently needed classrooms. It is our belief that youth is a national resource wherever it is found, and that it is the Federal Government's duty to give the most help to the neediest districts and the neediest States, so that all citizens of these United States may have the benefits of the best schools our country can produce.

The enclosed statement prepared by the Commissioner relating to certain aspects of Federal aid to education, I thought might be of some interest to you. It is always most helpful for me to have the comments of my friends throughout the State and I am grateful to you for taking the time to write to me in order that I might explain how I feel about the matter of providing Federal aid to Education.

With every warmest wish,

Sincerely,

John E. Fogarty, M. C.